

CITY OF PITTSBURGH



Mayor Peduto's Education Task Force Report

Policy Recommendations

2/10/2015

The Task Force, which includes members of both governments as well as community leaders, seeks to be the foundation for that united effort to improve of the lives of children and youth in our City, recognizing that the benefits will extend beyond the youngest residents and serve all who live, work and recreate in Pittsburgh.

I. Why Collaboration and Why Now?

Institutional collaboration, particularly across governments, is critical to improving the quality of services and to creating a more robust and vibrant community. Such collaboration, as distinct from spontaneous and ad hoc collaboration, requires the support of leadership from the governance level through to implementation. When city and school governments have established processes as part of a culture of collaborating with one another, there is a greater likelihood that the wellbeing of those being served – children, youth and adults – are at the center of decision-making rather than casual by-standers.

Mayor William Peduto's Education Task Force (the Task Force) represents a first step of critical collaboration between the two most important governmental institutions in the city: The City of Pittsburgh (the City) and the School District of Pittsburgh (the District), also known as the Pittsburgh Public Schools. From the introduction of the legislation creating the Task Force through each of its meetings, the need for increased, consistent and honest collaboration was the common thread of discussion and a clear desire of all participants.

These two independent governments with their legislative and executive branches, their different missions and separate authority to tax, their individual cultures and myriad of contracts, affect the lives of each and every Pittsburgh citizen directly through service provision and indirectly by creating the culture of our community. In 2015, the City and the District combined will spend over \$1 billion and employ thousands of people. Together, they employ approximately 7,000 individuals placing them among the region's largest employers and in possession tremendous influence to impact the direction of our community. For the vitality and future of Pittsburgh, the resources, energies, and activities of the City and District must be harmoniously united in efforts related to protecting, educating, supporting and encouraging the children and youth of the City.

The Task Force, which includes members of both governments as well as community leaders, seeks to be the foundation for that united effort to improve of the lives of children and youth in our City, recognizing that the benefits will extend beyond the youngest residents and serve all who live, work and recreate in Pittsburgh.

The opportunity to take steps towards more purposeful and strategic work together is unprecedented. Strong leadership at both the City and the District have demonstrated their commitment to communicating and cooperating on priorities and goals. Superintendent Linda Lane has a robust and clearly articulated vision for our schools and a continuous tenure, all of which make ongoing dialogue possible and productive. Mayor Peduto has sincerely committed his administration to improving relations between the City and the District as a first step towards enhancing the quality of education in Pittsburgh. Current elected members of both the Council and the District School Board recognize and value enhanced cooperation and coordination.

The time for these recommendations and the resulting work is now. Over the last ten to fifteen years, the City and the District have necessarily worked separately and diligently resolving the respective financial and operational challenges facing each government entity. Since 2003, the City has dedicated itself to solving its financial crises, with Mayor Peduto defining a path to success. In 2005, the District launched a powerful comprehensive reform agenda focused on academic excellence for all students while also beginning the difficult process of adjusting to dramatically declined enrollment. Today, those arduous efforts are beginning to bear fruit for both the City and the District. The City and the District will maintain their commitments to their respective strategic plans and goals, while simultaneously offering the energy and attention required for orchestrating more intentional and strategic forms of collaboration.

This strong leadership is driving improvements in both governments. The result: the City and District are ideally positioned to work jointly on improving services for children and youth. Evidence of the timeliness of this joint effort can be seen by our advancement to the next round of the Say Yes to Education competition.

The Task Force asserts that the City and the District must take advantage of the current conditions by designing collaborative efforts in areas in which the City can contribute to and support the mission and work of the District while simultaneously serving all of our citizens. Once genuine joint efforts are initiated at the leadership level and intentionally and systematically underway, institutional collaboration will expand and eventually lead to the improvement and alignment of services in ways that benefit the children and youth of the city. To that end, for its initial cooperative working agreement, the Task Force recommends initiating collaboration in five areas:

- Public safety
- Out of school time programming
- Community schools
- School funding
- Marketing the City's excellent public school options

The most obvious area for collaboration is in public safety. Both the City and the District have formal and informal roles and responsibilities regarding the safety of our children and youth, and the safety of our young people is central to the mission of both entities. Similarly, out-of-school time impacts both organizations. The District sees the benefits of out-of-school time programming when students attend more regularly and are more successful in the classroom, and the City hears about the benefits from parents who say that out-of-school time programs provide their children with safe opportunities for academic support and enrichment allowing them to feel comfortable working outside the home. Mayor Peduto and Superintendent Lane both support bringing quality services to the children who need them and are advocates for enhancing the links between our communities and our schools. As representatives of the citizens and taxpayers of Pittsburgh, the City and the District both know the importance of strong advocacy for an improved school funding system in Pennsylvania, one that brings adequacy, equity, predictability and accountability. Lastly, everyone has a role to play in

promoting the education excellence across Pittsburgh. Both the Superintendent and the Mayor are committed to attracting and holding population in Pittsburgh, which can only be successful with strong and unified marketing. The Pittsburgh Promise, for example, serves children and youth each and every day providing incentive and reward for students who achieve in our public schools. Its impact has been and continues to be the envy of many cities, nationally, providing a model for others to emulate. Promoting the excellent public school options in Pittsburgh will contribute greatly to increasing the impact of the Pittsburgh Promise.

The Task Force acknowledges that City and the District already work together. There are many examples of successful interactions occurring on a day-to-day basis. That has always been true. However, to improve the relationship and become more effective working together, the Task Force recommendations are targeted for the leadership level at the City and the District and are intended to encourage the creation of a culture of collaboration between the two.

Although there are two governments, we are one citizenry with one common goal for children and youth: making Pittsburgh the ideal place for all children to grow up, achieve academic excellence and fulfill a promising future. Our different governments – the District, City and County – each have roles to play and are each uniquely positioned to contribute to the development of our children and the future of our region. The Task Force strongly encourages the leadership of both the City of Pittsburgh and the Board of Education to take the steps necessary to cultivate more systematic and intentional collaborations and eventually align efforts of the two governments such that when it comes to serving children and youth they operate effectively as one cohesive system.

II. How Should More Systematic Collaboration Begin?

Like any successful relationship, institutional collaboration requires constant maintenance work, regular review and evaluation as well as a willingness to adjust and respond to changing conditions. As an initial step towards institutional collaboration, the Task Force identified five areas in which the City and the District could begin this process. The five areas of potential collaboration follow closely Mayor Peduto's charge "to strengthen our public schools and surrounding communities". In addition, they are areas in which the City will be able to utilize its resources in support of the mission of the District while simultaneously serving all citizens of the City. The scope of the Task Force included neither the time nor the personnel to conduct a deep examination of these areas. Instead, the Task Force here states preliminarily the case for collaboration and encourages the leadership of both the City and the District to assign personnel, conduct analysis affirming that these are, in fact, the most fruitful areas, and establish goals and work plans for collaboration. Regardless of where collaboration occurs, the goal is to eventually align efforts of the two governments such that they effectively serve the needs of children and youth as one cohesive system.

1. Public Safety

Public safety is the most obvious place of collaboration between the City and the District. Together, our two governments are jointly responsible for the safety of over thirty thousand

children and youth each day. The City's Public Safety Department oversees the Bureaus of Police, Fire, EMS, Animal Control and crossing guards all of whom work daily to improve the safety and well-being of all Pittsburghers. The District deploys uniformed officers and security guards serving primarily as the security for the schools and the areas immediately surrounding schools.

Room exists for improved collaboration through explicit recognition of the interrelationship of the agencies, through strategic partnerships to enhance youth-police relations and in promoting route safety to and from school.

The City operates the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the District operates the Office of School Security, both of which interact with each other. The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police has approximately 900 officers and combined annual expenditures of approximately \$76.8 million, including approximately \$2 million annually for crossing guards. As expressed in the City of Pittsburgh's 2015 Operating Budget, the mission of the Bureau of Police is "to protect and enhance the quality of life in the diverse neighborhoods of Pittsburgh by working in partnership with citizens, faith based organizations, and businesses, to prevent and solve problems while remaining sensitive to the authority with which it has been entrusted. It is the challenge of the Bureau to provide quality service with accountability, integrity, and respect."¹

The Pittsburgh Schools should be added to the mission statement, alongside faith-based organizations and businesses, as critical stakeholders. Additionally, the City should explicitly prioritize reducing and eliminating dangers in zones immediately surrounding all schools. Making neighborhoods safe for children and youth should be this administration's highest public safety priority. Collaboration among the departments of the City -- Public Safety, Building Inspection, City Planning and other departments -- along with school leaders and departments of the District is essential if our goal is to make all children safe.

The Pittsburgh School Office of School Safety employs approximately 90 security personnel for an annual operating budget of approximately \$6.4 million. As its mission statement makes clear, this office relies on the policing powers of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police to achieve its objectives. The mission of the Office of School Safety is to work "in cooperation with... city police and other governmental agencies to make certain that schools are safe, secure and welcoming for students and staff."²

Recent threats against different buildings in the Pittsburgh Schools or incidents in the vicinity of Pittsburgh Schools have demonstrated a high level of collaboration between the Bureau of Police and the Office of School Safety. Simultaneously, these incidents have highlighted the need for even more enhanced and on-going communication and collaboration on public safety matters. These two offices could, for example, review and possibly revise protocols so as to improve communication between the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the Office of School

¹ (2015 City budget page 209-222 http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/cbo/2015_Operating_Budget_Dec_15.pdf)

² (2015 Budget p 223-224 <http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/budget>)

Security, in ways that enable the Office of School Security to serve better the students and families of the Pittsburgh Schools and more effectively communicate with their stakeholders. Such protocols may involve allowing for greater flexibility in dealing with the needs of students, teachers and families during crisis situations involving the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.

Beyond protocols, the public safety employees of the City and the District should work more directly with one another. Both the City and the District share a common goal of ensuring minor school infractions or conduct violations do not result in filing charges and improving relations and engagement with minority communities, especially youth. With the hiring of a new Chief of Police, Cameron McLay, who is focused on improving youth-police relations, the opportunity to examine policing practices as they relate to equity in schools and in communities can be seized by both City and District departments together. According to the same budget document, the Operations Branch of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police “provides youth outreach programs through its DARE, GREAT and summer camp programs in which police officers interact with the youth of the City.”³ Those programs may prove to be instrumental in improving youth-police relations in addition to new reforms introduced by Chief McLay and should be examined more closely to ensure the highest level of effectiveness and participation.

Finally, the City and District share the common goal of improving the safety of routes for the over 13,000 children and youth who walk to school and out-of-school time programs each day. Improved safe routes to cultural assets, recreational activities and park space is also essential if we hope to achieve our aspirations of a community in which all children are taking full advantage of and enriching themselves through the assets and resources of our city and region. There are several ways to improve pedestrian route safety, including basic infrastructure improvements to enhance route safety for children and youth, and collaboration around the deployment of crossing guards, who protect pedestrians all across Pittsburgh.

Only through increased and strategic collaboration between the City and the District can route safety for children and youth be improved. Collaboratively developing materials educating children and youth of different ages on safe pedestrian practices and providing joint City-District training opportunities in all communities would help educate future generations on the importance of walking and route safety. Creating and promoting easily readable “safe route” maps clearly delineating lower and higher traffic streets, intersections and their management (sign, light, crossing guard, etc.) would increase awareness of safe routes to children, parents, and community members and establish the literal pathways to learning and enrichment. Community input on walkability around schools can inform city decisions around crosswalks, guardrails, and smart pedestrian signs.

Additionally, it is possible that enhanced collaboration between the City and the District would not only improve safety for children, youth and pedestrians but could also lead to more fiscally responsible decisions regarding personnel.

³ (2015 City budget page 209-222 http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/cbo/2015/Operating_Budget_Dec_15.pdf)

2. Out-of-School Time Programs

Out-of-school time programming includes before school, afterschool, weekend programming, summer opportunities, mentoring, and internships. These programs provide formal and structured opportunities that add to the development of youth academically, socially, emotionally and physically. Out-of-school time programs are offered by a diverse set of providers including schools, communities, faith-based and youth-serving organizations, cultural institutions, as well as city and state agencies. These programs have significant positive impacts on the lives of the children and youth.⁴ These positive impacts include:

- Supporting working families
- Improving learning and school attendance
- Greater gains for students with greatest risk
- Keeping kids safe, healthy and on track for success
- Improving community engagement and involvement with the schools and its children.

In Pittsburgh there are approximately 34,000 school-age children, of whom approximately 28% participate in an out-of-school time program.¹ Of the school-age population, 18% are unsupervised after school.² Parents of school-age children are strong supporters of expanding access to high quality out-of-school time programs. In its recent survey, the Afterschool Alliance, a national advocacy organization, found that in Allegheny County 86% of parents support public funding for afterschool.⁵ Of those parents in Allegheny County who have children in out-of-school time programs, 72% agree that afterschool programs can help reduce the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors and 66% agree that afterschool programs help children gain workforce skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking.⁶

The District is by necessity extensively engaged with out-of-school programming, and the Pittsburgh Schools prioritize out-of-school time learning as a way to support the work done in the classroom and as a way of preparing students to be graduation ready, Promise ready as well as college and career ready. Under the authority of the District, James Doyle, Coordinator of After-School Programs, focuses exclusively with managing the 84 different partner organizations working with the Pittsburgh Schools. During the 2013-14 school year, those providers served nearly 5,300 unique students. The non-profit community is also engaged. Mila Yochum, Executive Director of the Allegheny Partnership for Out of School Time (APOST), serves as one of our region's leading voices for expanding access to high quality out-of-school time programs. Together, these two leaders along with the hundreds of providers and their funding partners are leading the way when it comes to out-of-school time programs.

⁴ *Afterschool Programs: Making a Difference in America's Communities by Improving Academic achievement, Keeping Kids Safe and Helping Working Families* http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Afterschool_Outcomes_2013.pdf

⁵ Afterschool Alliance. *Allegheny County After 3PM*. Washington DC, 2014. Available on <http://www.afterschoolpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Allegheny-AA3PM-2014-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>

⁶ Afterschool Alliance. *Allegheny County After 3PM*. Washington DC, 2014. Available on <http://www.afterschoolpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Allegheny-AA3PM-2014-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>

The City and the District are also already at the heart of a movement – the Kids+Creativity Network – “to become a community where children, parents, and teachers can easily access remarkable experiences and high-quality products that foster creative learning and play- both in and out-of-school.”⁷ This is a movement beautifully integrated into all aspects of the new Pittsburgh -- technology, art, media, play -- and has the potential to revolutionize the way children and youth learn, work and recreate.

At the same time that Pittsburgh is revolutionizing the content and the act of learning, it is also radically changing the relationship between learning in the classroom and learning outside of the classroom, in-school and out-of-school time learning. This past summer, Pittsburgh was one of five cities selected to be a City of Learning and, thereby, able to offer more than three thousand young people the opportunity to follow individual pathways of learning connecting them with a wide variety of city resources and learning in a practical, hands-on way. As a result of their efforts, students earned badges that recognized different skills, competencies and dispositions acquired during the learning process. The City of Learning project and the badging that took place brought together formal and informal educators from across the region and elevated the idea of Pittsburgh as a City where learning at all levels and all areas is valued, all citizens are recognized as learners and residents are united in our efforts to collectively improve ourselves and our community.

The demand for out-of-school time programs is growing dramatically⁸, while its value is increasingly recognized. Pittsburgh is rapidly expanding its non-traditional learning opportunities. Only if the City and the District collaborate systematically and intentionally can we ensure an equitable distribution of these opportunities, so that all students and young people realize greater access to higher quality, more innovative learning opportunities outside of school.

The City has an important role to play in supporting the growth and expansion of access to out-of-school time programs and ensuring that all students in Pittsburgh have access to quality programming. Cities across the country have taken the lead in establishing coordinating entities that build, maintain and support a robust network of providers serving children and youth from Kindergarten to graduation.⁹ Cities like St. Paul, Nashville, Omaha and others have established such coordinating entities responsible for convening meetings, raising funds, improving quality, advocating, and developing a common data system. The City should lead in the creation of a citywide coordinating entity for all providers of out-of-school time programs, join advocacy efforts to make certain that public funding is available so that all children and

⁷ <http://remakelearning.org/collection/kcn/>

⁸ Afterschool Alliance. *Allegheny County After 3PM*. Washington DC, 2014. Available on <http://www.afterschoolpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Allegheny-AA3PM-2014-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>

⁹ Adelaja, A., Charner, I., Dailey C., Simkin L., Taub, H., and Watts, E. *Is City Wide Coordination Going Nationwide? An Exploratory Study in Large Cities*. Wallace Foundation: Washington DC, September 2013. Available on <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/Documents/Is-Citywide-Afterschool-Coordination-Going-Nationwide.pdf>

youth have access to these high quality programs, and connect with existing efforts to bring increased coordination.

The City of Pittsburgh has been offering summer youth employment for several years, and in 2014 over 500 youth were employed at over 140 worksites across the City. In collaboration with the District and in partnership with the businesses of Allegheny County, Mayor Peduto should take the lead and push the growth of the Summer Youth Employment Program, bringing together a wide variety of partners and, if necessary, securing philanthropic support for these efforts.

A good model to consider is across the state to Philadelphia, through Mayor Nutter's leadership, the WorkReady Philadelphia program has been transformed into a robust partnership between government and local employers. With over 50 participating organizations, this program provides meaningful employment experiences and exposure to career opportunities. Youth who are between the ages of 12 and 21 are eligible to participate and paid for their work experiences that typically last approximately six weeks. Thousands of youth participate each year.

In addition, more intentional partnerships should be created to enhance offerings to children and youth at recreation centers and in different communities where needs are high. The City should support increased quality by aligning existing contracts or agreements with youth-service providers to the academic goals of the District and The Promise and to the APOST quality standards. Additionally, many out-of-school providers, like child-care providers, are small businesses and would benefit from small business development and support from the city. Finally, the City and the District have been and should continue being supportive of the Kids+Creativity Network and the work of hundreds of organizations that have joined forces to Remake Learning in Pittsburgh.

3. *Community and Schools Initiative*

A community school establishes partnerships with the surrounding community and provides students and their families with all the services they need to achieve academic success. Students and families can be connected to services either directly because they are co-located in the school building or indirectly through partnerships. With a focus on integrated services, community schools can be a person-based and student focused solution, not limited by place or building. The key to this model is to balance the active engagement of community members in rethinking the role that schools play in our community and that community plays in schools with data driven analysis provided by experts. This is an area where the strength of collaboration and leadership between the City and the District will likely define success.

The Task Force supports the development of community schools for at-risk, low-income students and organized around the principle that for these students more coordinated and integrated service could potentially contribute to eliminating academic and non-academic barriers to success. This model integrates services into the life of the school – and sometimes the building - in a manner that meets the needs of the student to address the non-academic

barriers to success. In a community school with truly integrated services, supports can be provided at the student level in the form of tutoring and out-of-school time programs as well as at the parent level in the form of health services like dental and vision care or social services like parent education and counseling.

In the proposed model, each community school has a designated coordinator who performs regular assessments of student needs and who organizes and coordinates the provision of service for the student and, when appropriate, the family. Regular assessments of the needs of each student in each school require constant flexibility and strong relationships with a wide variety of service providers. A focus on integrated services allows community schools to link students with an individually constructed, relatively flexible set of services made available in the community and the school. Over time, as the population of students fluctuates and the needs change, the community school concept and the coordinator are flexible enough to modify the mix of services needed.

Community schools can benefit from a data rich environment to support the alignment of student and family services. In collaboration with County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Mayor Peduto has made powerful commitments to open information, data sharing and evidence based decision-making. Recent investments include the creation of a Department of Innovation and Performance, the hiring of a dedicated Data & Analytics manager and the institution of performance-based budgeting. Like never before, the City is in a position to be able to share information that can help improve the lives of children. In partnership with the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University, Mayor Peduto and County Executive Fitzgerald plan to make our region a national leader in the sharing and use of information.

At the same time, the data sharing agreement between the Pittsburgh Schools and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services has received national attention and laud.¹⁰ The Allegheny County Department of Human Services has a one-of-a-kind, national model data warehouse and the recently formed a relationship with the Center for Social and Urban Research at the University of Pittsburgh, thereby enhancing further data sharing and analyzing capacities. This powerful tool must play a central role in the development of the community school concept.

Evidence and information – from district, city and county data sources – should play an essential role in determining the value of community schools and help shape plans. Should the District seek to establish one or more community schools, the leadership of the City can advocate alongside the District for the provision of services associated with the successful design. The City can support the District in other ways as well, including in any permitting process required for renovation, in the establishing of safe routes, in aligning resources and in building connections between the community school and other neighborhood assets, and providing some of the funding required for this model.

¹⁰U.S. Government Accountability Office. *Sustained and Coordinated Efforts Could Facilitate Data Sharing While Protecting Privacy*. Rep. n.p., 2013.

4. School Funding

The way Pennsylvania funds public education directly affects all citizens of Pittsburgh. Pennsylvania contributes less than 39% of the funds required to operate school districts across the state, which creates a greater reliance on local property taxes to fund education costs. Recent reports demonstrate that Pennsylvania has a fairly regressive school funding system in which poorer districts receive less state support than wealthier districts.¹¹ Furthermore, over the last four years the gap between the spending of wealthy districts and poorer districts has growing significantly. Although there is risk that the outcome of this conversation may impact funding to the District, ultimately the children of the City will be best served by having both the City and District advocating on their behalf with a united voice in Harrisburg.

In 2014, the Pennsylvania State Legislature passed legislation creating the Pennsylvania Basic Education Funding Commission (the Commission) to examine the \$5.5 billion provided annually by the state through the Basic Education Funding line item to school districts.¹² This is the second largest line item in the state budget and funding is distributed without consideration of student population or need.

In August, the Commission began receiving testimony from education experts, advocates and leaders across the state and will continue to meet and receive testimony into 2015. The current makeup includes Senator Matt Smith from Allegheny County. Leadership changes in the House and Senate may generate changes in the composition of the Commission. No timeline has been set for ending their hearings or making a recommendation.

The Campaign for Fair Education Funding formed independently of the Commission and includes nearly 50 organizations from multiple sectors.¹³ Locally participants include: Allies for Children, A+ Schools, the Allegheny Conference, the Education Law Center, the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network and the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh. The Campaign is developing its own recommendations for a new funding formula would focus specifically on ensuring that the Basic Education Funding line is adequately, equitably, predictably and accountably funded. The Campaign for Fair Education Funding is currently developing its recommendations, which should be finalized by mid-January 2015.

The District is already engaged in advocacy efforts related to school funding and the City should engage this work as well. Mayor Peduto spoke at the launch of the Campaign for Fair Education Funding advocating that reforms should benefit students in Pittsburgh. The City should advocate alongside the Superintendent for reforms that support students in Pittsburgh. The

¹¹ <http://www.air.org/resource/educational-equity-adequacy-and-equal-opportunity-commonwealth-evaluation-pennsylvanias>

¹² <http://basiceducationfundingcommission.pasenategop.com>

¹³ <http://fairfundingpa.org>

City should also engage the Campaign for Fair Education Funding to better understand its position regarding the reform of Pennsylvania's system of education funding and advocate for fair education funding in Pittsburgh.

In addition to the Campaign for Fair Education Funding, the City and District have the opportunity to advocate together on issues of mutual benefit in Harrisburg. Some examples may include improving the state budget for education, evaluating the balance of earned income tax revenues split by the City and District and exploring alternative revenue sources to both taxing bodies.

5. *Marketing Education Excellence for All*

A strong marketing presence is essential for the long-term success of both the City and the District. Pittsburgh is growing, with families coming into the region and others moving within the region. Many of our schools provide excellent education opportunities in safe environments, a fact important to individuals, couples, and families looking to move. The District offerings include: an international baccalaureate program at Pittsburgh Barack Obama Academy of International Studies in East Liberty, a STEM-focused school at Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy in Oakland, and Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts School in Downtown. All of these schools, and many more, have unique characteristics that can fill the need of families in Pittsburgh. Finally, The Pittsburgh Promise is a rallying point for the entire Pittsburgh community and a symbol to the wider world of Pittsburgh's commitment to its children and youth: It's a statement regarding the value we place on providing education opportunities for all. Pittsburgh's strong public schools and promise of higher education should be used as a selling point for the city.

The District also offers one of the best early childhood education programs in the Commonwealth. The District provides early childhood services to approximately 2,200 children from infancy through five-years of age while partnering with a diverse set of providers who offer early childhood education to thousands more. The comprehensive services these children receive not only educate but provide critical support for students in need of nutrition, physical health, mental health, disability and social services. By meeting the needs of the "whole child" we ensure that all children are prepared for kindergarten entrance. The Program serves children through a variety of funding sources, regardless of family income.

Both the City and the District already dedicate resources toward promoting our region. The District employs two individuals in its Office of Public Information. The office is responsible for coordinating news coverage for the District and handling official communication with the media. In addition, the Office maintains active social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. The District's website is updated daily with news related to the District and its activities. The official logo of District was created by the Design Department of Carnegie Mellon University, and its appearance is kept to strict standards.

The City's informational vehicles include a website, television channel as well as strong relationships with agencies like Visit Pittsburgh and news vehicles like Pop City, Vibrant

Pittsburgh and NextPittsburgh, charged with the goal of bringing visitors and new residents to the city. The strong brand of the District should be promoted through all of the City's information outlets as well as through Visit Pittsburgh and other promotional portals. All city promotional vehicles should include information about the strength of the school and the district.

Other potential partnerships include incorporating information about the District in trainings and packets for real estate agents in Pittsburgh to ensure that those selling homes to incoming citizens can talk about the strengths of the District. Charter schools are an important part of the fabric of public education and graduates of charter schools are eligible to receive Promise scholarship funds. Charters schools should be included in all promotional materials as well as included in any future discussions related to public education in Pittsburgh.

Most critically, the City and District should better collaborate on promotion of The Pittsburgh Promise. To date, The Promise has funded more than 5,400 local students attending four-year, two-year or trade and technical schools. More than 1,000 students have completed their educations, most of whom are gainfully employed. Approximately \$56.5 million has been invested in our youth since The Promise's inception in 2008. During that time, the graduation rate among students of Pittsburgh's Public Schools has risen from 63% to 72%. In two of the last three years, the Pittsburgh Public Schools have seen an increase in Kindergarten enrollment. And the city's population has shown growth for the first time in 50 years.

The District's sponsorship of community events on network television is an example of the kind of positive messaging that should continue from the District. The task force also collected a number of creative suggestions from the community about how best to promote the work of the district and can serve as a resource to City and District communications professionals as they design mutually reinforcing media and communications strategies. The task force also recognizes the untapped resource that Pittsburgh Public School alumni can provide to positively promoting the district.

As Pittsburgh's population continues to increase, we must convince families and young couples that the best district to send their children to is Pittsburgh Schools. The District's deliberate and sustained efforts to improve current students' core educational experience are of primary importance. To complement the District's efforts to improve its core business, the District and the City must continue to work together to find innovative ways to market the excellence of our schools. This Task Force offers itself as a vehicle to do just that.

III. What Does the Task Force Recommend?

The Task Force makes the following set of recommendations to the Mayor and Council of the City of Pittsburgh and Superintendent and the Pittsburgh Board of Education. The Task Force strongly encourages the leadership of both governments to formally accept the mandate to consider these recommendations and to establish working groups consisting of the appropriate

employees from both the City and the District to review and begin working on the recommendations. The Task Force requests that the Mayor and Superintendent jointly provide the Task Force and the public with updates on progress towards implementation.

Recommendations for Public Safety

- *The Task Force recommends the City add the Pittsburgh Schools to the mission statement of the Bureau of Police alongside other critical stakeholders and that the City explicitly prioritize reducing and eliminating all dangers in zones immediately surrounding all schools.*
- *The Task Force recommends the City and the District develop detailed protocols for enhanced collaboration between the Pittsburgh Public Safety Department and the Office of School Security, thereby enabling the Office of School Security and the Pittsburgh Schools to better serve students and more effectively communicate with parents and families. Such protocols may involve allowing for greater flexibility in dealing with the needs of students, teachers and families during situations involving the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police. Such protocols may also involve increased cross-training of school police in various functions, not limited to crossing guards.*
- *The Task Force recommends the mission statements of both the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the Office of School Security explicitly recognize the interrelationship of the agencies.*
- *The Task Force recommends the City and the District review and evaluate existing strategic partnerships focused on improving youth-police relations with an eye to ensuring the highest level of effectiveness and participation. In addition, the Summer Youth Employment Program should include a public safety track and possibly a Police Athletic league, thereby promoting improved relations as well as the work of other programs such as DARE and GREAT.*
- *The Task Force recommends the City and the District develop collaboratively a strategy for improving route safety for all children and youth, including infrastructure enhancements, improved deployment of crossing guards, the creation of materials educating young people of all ages on safe pedestrian practices.*
- *The Task Force also recommends that the City and District collaborate on the development and promotion of a citywide safe routes map specifically focused on connecting children and youth to important academic, cultural and recreational assets in communities across Pittsburgh.*

Recommendations for Out of School Time Programs:

- *The Task Force recommends the City and the District, in collaboration with Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST), develop and implement plans for establishing a system for coordinating existing out-of-school time program opportunities in the City and developing a strategy for expanding access for all children and youth in Pittsburgh.*
- *The Task Force recommends that as the City and the District develop the strategy related to out-of-school time that they continue to place a high priority on ensuring that all provider types are able and encouraged to participate. Having a diverse pool of*

providers is important for the inherent stability of a sound out-of-school time system for children and youth.

- *The Task Force recommends that in close collaboration with the District and in partnership with the businesses of Allegheny County, Mayor Peduto should take the lead grow the Summer Youth Employment Program into a robust opportunity for children and youth by bringing together a wide variety of partners and, if necessary, securing philanthropic support for these efforts.*
- *The Task Force recommends that the City and the District embrace the Kids+Creativity, the City of Learning and badging in Pittsburgh and the innovative learning practices these opportunities present for children and youth all across Pittsburgh.*

Recommendations for Community Schools

- *The Task Force recommends the District develop and refine further its concept of a community school and share its plans with stakeholders, including the City. Evidence and information – from district, city and county data sources – must play a central role in determining the value of community schools and help shape plans.*
- *The Task Force recommends that the City identify ways in which it could support the policy decisions of the District in general and specifically as it relates to the possible implementation and funding of the community schools model of integrated services.*
- *The Task Force recommends that the City and District continue to engage citizens and actively seek public input as policies develop to guide community schools in the city.*

Recommendations for School Funding

- *The Task Force recommends the City advocate alongside the Superintendent and School Board for fair education funding for Pittsburgh. Both the City and the District should engage the Campaign for Fair Education Funding together to better understand its position regarding the reform of Pennsylvania’s system of education funding and advocate for fair education funding in Pittsburgh.*
- *The Task Force recommends that the City and the District identify opportunities for sharing services and achieving savings for the citizens of Pittsburgh.*

Recommendations for Marketing Education Excellence

- *The Task Force strongly recommends the City become equal partners with the District in the promotion of the Pittsburgh Promise. The Promise is one of the most important educational reforms in the city’s history and manifests our values as a community: We want all members of our community to have equal and powerful opportunities for success in life.*
- *The Task Force recommends that all city officials including the Mayor, City Council and Controller promote to our region, our state and our nation the amazing educational opportunities – from early childhood education and K-12 offerings, to the Pittsburgh Promise and more – available to all children in Pittsburgh. The Mayor should take an active role in ensuring that individuals and organizations that actively recruit people to the City, including business promotion agencies and real estate agents, are aware of the strength of the public school system and are actively promoting relocation to the City.*

- *The Task Force recommends that the City and the District recognize that charter schools are an important part of the fabric of public education and as such deserve to be included in any future discussions with individuals and organizations focused on serving children and youth.*

IV. How Did the Task Force Conduct Its Work?

On September 17, 2013, City Councilwoman Theresa Kail-Smith introduced Resolution 215, which called for the creation of the Education Task Force. Resolution 215 was taken up and passed by City Council and was signed by Mayor Luke Ravenstahl on October 31, 2013. Mayor William Peduto, on February 21, 2014, officially announced the formation of the Mayor's Education Task Force, bringing together twenty-one (21) members of the education community. The City of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Board of Education, teachers, parents, students, advocates, members of the faith-based community, and residents were all represented on the Task Force. Mayor Peduto tasked the group with "examining public education in the City of Pittsburgh, and issuing recommendations to strengthen our public schools and surrounding communities." By June 2014, all members of the Task Force had been named and included:

- Linda Lane, Superintendent, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Curtiss Porter, Chief Education & Neighborhood Reinvestment, City of Pittsburgh
- Cossette Grant-Overton, Manager of Education Policy, City of Pittsburgh
- R. Daniel Lavelle, Member of Pittsburgh City Council
- Natalia Rudiak, Member of Pittsburgh City Council
- Theresa Kail-Smith, Member of Pittsburgh City Council
- Deborah Gross, Member of Pittsburgh City Council
- Michael Lamb, Controller for City of Pittsburgh
- Terry Kennedy, Director, Pittsburgh Board of Education
- Regina Holley, Director, Pittsburgh Board of Education
- The Rev. Dr. Darryl Canady, Pastor, Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church
- Nina Esposito-Visgitis, President, Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers
- Jessie Ramey, Parent and founder, Yinzercation
- Brian Brown, community and youth organizer, Hill District Consensus Group
- Betsy Magley, parent, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Derek Long, teacher, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Kim Flurry, teacher, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Sara Segel, parent, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Hazel Blackman, Hazelwood resident
- Hawa Mganga, Pittsburgh Brashear High School student
- Don Crawford, Pittsburgh Obama 6-12 graduate
- Stephen O'Brion, Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy 6-12 student
- Carey Harris, Executive Director, A+ Schools
- Patrick Dowd, Executive Director, Allies for Children

The Task Force convened for its inaugural meeting on June 17, 2014. Curtiss Porter and Cossette Grant-Overton planned the meeting and Preston C. Green of the University of Connecticut facilitated the discussion. On Wednesday, July 9, 2014, the Task Force met for its second meeting. Curtiss Porter and Cossette Grant-Overton facilitated the discussion. The third Task Force meeting was held on September 29, 2014. The focus of the meeting was on possible collaboration between the City and School District, looking at examples of what other cities have successfully done. The Task Force held its first public meeting on October 21, 2014 at Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy, a Pittsburgh 6-12 school. Curtiss Porter facilitated the discussion, which included time for public comment. The fifth and final meeting of the Task Force was held on December 8, 2014 in Pittsburgh City Council Chambers and Mayor Peduto participated. The members of the Task Force provided Mayor Peduto with an update and together agreed that improved collaboration between the City and the District would benefit the children and youth as well as all who live, work and recreate in Pittsburgh. The Task Force identified five main areas in which collaborative efforts should begin. Those areas are public safety, out-of-school time programming, community schools, school funding and marketing the excellence of education in Pittsburgh. Mayor Peduto emphasized the need for a vision and plan for each of these priorities and that the Task Force should remain involved and promote collaboration.

The Task Force provided the opportunity for critical dialogue among members of the community. The discussions of the Task Force focused on unity, rather than division. Student voices highlighted key issues – the quality of education and the safety of students – which helped drive conversation toward a common agenda.

V. What Comes Next?

In the past, barriers of different types have prevented the City and the District from establishing institutional collaboration and aligning the work of the two governments in a way that puts the needs of children and youth at the center. The Task Force asserts that now is the time to initiate these efforts and that work in the areas outlined above will carry value in-and-of-itself, but will also lead to more systematic and intentional cross-governmental collaboration.

Managing projects – from communications to out-of-school time coordination – should enhance collaboration more generally by necessitating that district and city employees to work together, know each other, and build trust. However, the City and District may want to implement a more formal inter-governmental structure to support collaboration and dialogue. For example, city, county, state and federal governmental bodies regularly communicate to solve problems for constituents who generally do not distinguish between governmental bodies. The same should be true for the District and City, potentially through a formalized “liaison” position or through a formalized structure created by participation in programs such as Say Yes to Education, which may prove to be a possibility in the future.

Similarly, the request has been made that the Task Force continue to meet and facilitate collaboration between the City and the District. The Task Force could play an oversight role while also serving as a community connector, assisting with projects like marketing city schools.

Together, these three structures – cooperation necessary to work on the recommendations, a formal grant funded structure or liaison position, and the oversight and trouble-shooting of the Task Force – could do much to enhance the nascent collaboration between the City and the District. Those who care about education and urban life understand how central each is to the other. We must seize this opportunity to foster a culture of collaboration between the City and the District that will eventually align efforts of the two governments such that they effectively serve the needs of children and youth as one cohesive system, while simultaneously benefiting all who live, work and recreate in Pittsburgh. The future of our community depends on it.